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In Defense of CIA

Charges that the Central Intelligence Agency has been infiltrated by Soviet agents are untrue, says the assistant Republican floor leader in the House.

It is time someone spoke in defense of the CIA, and Rep. Leslie C. Arends of Illinois is qualified to do it as a member of the House Armed Services subcommittee that examines activities of the agency.

This group holds no public hearings and issues no reports, because to do so would impair effectiveness of the CIA. But Rep. Arends indicates its inquiry into agency operations is much more intensive than Congress is led to believe.

Arends demolishes the statement of a Polish defector, Michael Goleniewski, to the effect that Russian agents have penetrated the CIA and deplores "wild accusations" going the rounds. He says the subcommittee went into every aspect of the Goleniewski case.

Congress must decide whether the CIA needs closer supervision and how it should be imposed. Meanwhile, unsubstantiated allegations that the agency is shot through with communist spies should be taken with a grain of salt.